

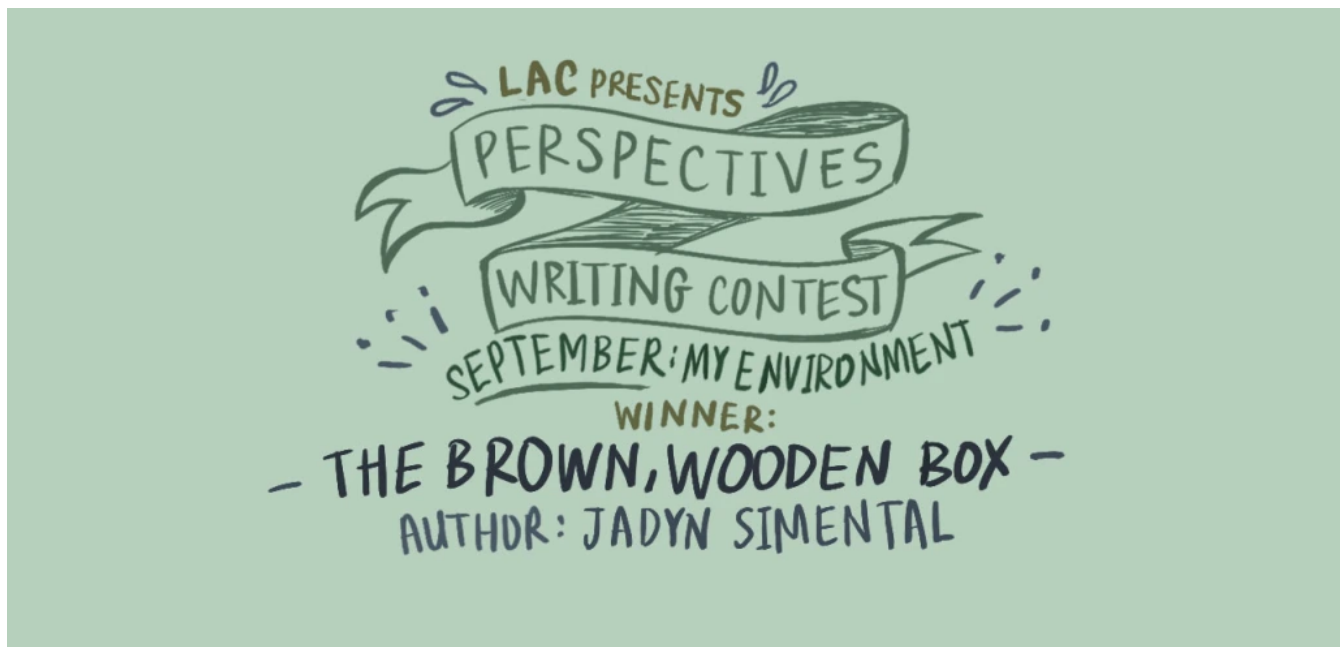


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The Brown, Wooden Box



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Graphic by Quynhmai Tran.

Not many people know about the brown, wooden box. The box is small, but the wooden figures that live in the brown, wooden box aren't fragile to the large territories surrounding. I imagine the little people in the box as pieces of treasure, untouchable. The figures belong to me, as I belong to them. Of course, the pieces don't need to be touched, because every individual knows the steps necessary to take, which are in many ways predictable. For years I observed the environment of the brown, wooden box and its small wooden civilians' values. The pieces living their daily lives value their devotion to the community. They see the box as their perfect, little world unharmed and safe. They claim their territory far from the exotic distaste the outside societies drag from unfamiliar territory.

The outside areas of the box may see the box as a prison, trapping civilians in the middle of vast land with little to see and nothing fresh to experience. The wooden figures, however, see the box as their own island of paradise they believe society neglects to relish every day. They have plenty to eat, and their community lies so strong within one another, "stranger" can't be found in the books the wooden children read at the schoolhouse.

There's no need to explain the names of the wooden figures, because publicity holds no value in the box. The wooden figures often travel outside, but always return. To most of the figures there is no other home than the wooden box because each face is familiar. It doesn't take a scientist to understand, any person feels comfortable with familiarity. Again, there is no point to name a wooden figure, they're wooden for a reason. Nobody outside is likely to recognize one of their faces, to outsiders it's just a blank, wooden face. The wooden figures all seem the same from the outside perspective, because their values, work, and schedule all reflect one another. This doesn't matter to the civilians of the wooden box. Civilians from the bigger territories see greatness in the fame from Hollywood, money, and making a life they think will make them happy. The wooden box differs in a way, understanding that their joy comes from the strong community of amity for one another. In the end, the

eminence in life comes from the sweat they burn for a perfect house, perfect family, and the little, yet fulfilling life.

From the outside, people will see a wooden box, with wooden figures that all act upon and understand a uniform enterprise; but, the people within see things differently. I am a wooden figure, and I left the wooden box. The new people I pass every day see a blank, wooden face, because to them I'm just another person hoping to find success in a big world. As I experience new things in the outside society, I still find no greater joy than from the civilians I know and love from the box. If I were to step into the box today, the wooden face of mine would develop definition: brown eyes, brown skin, a face that finds itself too often in a smile in the best and worst situations; the face becomes unique and recognizable to those of the brown, wooden box. The box might not have the material treasures one might hope to hold joys in, but it has a harmonic treasure with the people I know. The story of the brown, wooden box is home.



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